



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Western District of New York

Further inquiries: (716)843-5814

138 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202

PROJECT EXILE PRESS RELEASE

September 26, 2003

RE: UNITED STATES v. ABDUL R. MUHAMMAD a/k/a ROBERT BOYKINS

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle announced today a Federal Grand Jury has returned a one-count Indictment, against Abdul R. Muhammad a/k/a Robert Boykins, age 34, of 90 Loepere Street, Buffalo, New York, charging him with unlawfully and knowingly possessing a firearm, in that he had previously been convicted of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year. This charge is in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(1) and is punishable by a maximum period of incarceration of ten years, or a fine of \$250,000 or both. It should be noted that the fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime . . . is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. **(Disciplinary Rule 7-107(B)(6)).**

United States Attorney Battle noted that this case arose and is a part of the recently re-initiated Project Exile Program between the United States Attorney's Office and the Erie County District Attorney's Office. Project Exile involves a cooperative effort

between the Erie County District Attorney's Office and United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of New York with regard to the prosecution of firearms offenses. In instances where the prosecution of an alleged firearm offense would result in a potentially greater penalty if prosecuted federally, the Erie County District Attorney's Office has agreed to cooperate with the United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of New York in the federal prosecution of such cases. The present Indictment, which was a direct referral from the Buffalo Police Department to the United States Attorney's Office, is an example of such cooperation.

Assistant United States Attorney Richard P. Maigret stated that the present Indictment charges the defendant with, on August 31, 2003, illegally possessing a Norinco, model SKS, 7.62x39mm caliber, semi-automatic assault rifle, in that the defendant previously had been convicted of felony offenses. The Indictment charges that the defendant was previously convicted of two felonies. Both of these offenses are crimes that are punishable by a period of incarceration of greater than one year.

This investigation was conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives from the Buffalo Field Office under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Dave DeJoe, assisted by and in conjunction with members of the Buffalo Police Department, under the direction of Commissioner Rocco Diina. Prosecution of this case will be handled by Assistant United States Attorney Maigret.

* * *